

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (currently amended) A method for preparing an ink having constituents of a water-soluble dye having a water-soluble solubilizing group of at least one selected from the group consisting of a sulfonic group and a carboxyl group, water, a water-soluble substance that is condensation-polymerized in the absence of said water, a water-soluble medium and an additive including at least one selected from the group consisting of an organic acid salt and an inorganic acid salt, comprising:

a first mixing step of mixing at least said dye and said water-soluble substance that is condensation-polymerized in the absence of said water out of said constituents of said ink excluding said additive;

~~a second mixing step of mixing a mixture obtained in the first mixing step and said additive; and~~

a pH adjusting step, ~~performed before the second mixing step,~~ of preparing a solution including said a mixture obtained in the first mixing step ~~or a solution including said additive~~ while adjusting said solution to a given pH range by using a pH adjuster; and

a second mixing step, performed after the pH adjusting step, of mixing said solution including said mixture and said additive.

2. (canceled)

3. (canceled)

4. (original) The method for preparing an ink of Claim 1,

wherein said water-soluble substance that is condensation-polymerized in the absence of said water is a hydrolytic organic silicon compound or a partial hydrolysate thereof.

5. (original) The method for preparing an ink of Claim 1,

wherein said water-soluble substance that is condensation-polymerized in the absence of said water is a hydrolytic organic silicon compound having an amino group or a partial hydrolysate thereof.

6. (original) The method for preparing an ink of Claim 1,

wherein a cation of said additive is  $\text{NH}_4^+$ .

7. (original) The method for preparing an ink of Claim 1,

wherein said pH adjuster is an alkaline substance.

8. (original) The method for preparing an ink of Claim 7,

wherein said alkaline substance is at least one selected from the group consisting of sodium hydrate, potassium hydrate, ammonia and organic amines.

9. (original) The method for preparing an ink of Claim 1,

wherein the given pH range of said solution adjusted in the pH adjusting step is a pH range of 8 to 11.

10. (canceled)

11. (canceled)

12. (new) A method for preparing an ink having constituents of a water-soluble dye having a water-soluble solubilizing group of at least one selected from the group consisting of a sulfonic group and a carboxyl group, water, a water-soluble substance that is condensation-polymerized in the absence of said water, a water-soluble medium and an additive including at least one selected from the group consisting of an organic acid salt and an inorganic acid salt, comprising:

a first mixing step of mixing at least said dye and said water-soluble substance that is condensation-polymerized in the absence of said water out of said constituents of said ink excluding said additive;

a pH adjusting step of preparing a solution including said additive while adjusting said solution to a given pH range by using a pH adjuster; and

a second mixing step, performed after said pH adjusting step, of mixing said solution including said additive and a mixture obtained in the first mixing step,

wherein a cation of said additive is  $\text{NH}_4^+$ .